

090867Z JUL 74

cutting triangular tortilla chip preforms from a sheet of masa;

restraining the tortilla chip preforms within said molds while cooking the tortilla chip preforms in a cooking medium, thereby substantially maintaining the orientation of the tortilla chip preforms while they are being cooked; and then

wherein said consistent orientation comprises an alternating pattern of tortilla chip preforms with base edges and apex corners of successive tortilla chip preforms within the molds alternating orientation, whereby said tortilla chip preforms can be placed relatively compactly and close together within said molds so as to minimize space therebetween.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said sheet of masa is formed by:

forming a sheet of snack food dough;

toasting the sheet of snack food dough to achieve a desired moisture content;

proofing the sheet of snack food dough such that the moisture content thereof equilibrates; and

imparting a desired texture to said sheet of snack food dough by passing said sheet of snack food dough through a shaping roller assembly.